

LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

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P R O C E E D I N G S

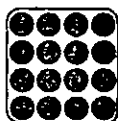
Tuesday, January 23, 1979

10:00 o'clock a.m.

MARC DUPUY, JR.
Chairman.

Wildlife and Fisheries
Building, Room 102
400 Royal Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.



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P R O C E E D I N G S

. . . Pursuant to notice, the regular monthly meeting of Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission convened at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on Tuesday, January 23, 1979, in Room 102, Wildlife and Fisheries Building, 400 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, Marc Dupuy, Jr., Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT WERE:

MARC DUPUY, JR., Chairman
 DONALD F. WILLE, Vice Chairman
 DOYLE G. BERRY, Member
 J. C. GILBERT, Member
 JEAN LAPEYRE, Member
 H. CLAY LUTTRELL, Member
 CHARLES RIGGS, Member
 J. BURTON ANGELLE, Secretary

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A G E N D A

1. Approval of minutes of December 18, 1978. (4)
MR. HARRY SCHAFER
2. Discuss closing of oyster season before (5)
 April 1st date.
3. Set date for meeting with shrimp industry (8)



representatives and set date for meeting for brown shrimp season.

MR. ALLAN ENSMINGER

4. Consider extension of trapping season. (10)

MR. JOE HERRING

5. Discussion of trapping season on Russell (13)

Sage Wildlife Management Area.

6. National Wildlife Week Resolution. (17)

OTHER BUSINESS

7. Delcambre Shrimp Association representative (21)

discussion of three-day shrimp season
for Vermilion Bay.

8. Set date and place for annual public hearings (41)

on seasons and bag limits.

9. Set date for February meeting. (42)

NOTE: The following items not on the printed
agenda were also considered:

Attendance at meetings of Enforcement (43)

Officers and Louisiana Wildlife
Federation.

Steel shot regulations, 1979-80 hunting (44)

season.

ADJOURNMENT (51)



CHAIRMAN MARC DUPUY, JR.: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I think we have a quorum so we might go ahead and proceed.

Although I have been a member of the Commission for a good number of years, this is my first meeting as Chairman and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other members of the Commission for electing me as Chairman and for the privilege and pleasure to serve as the Chairman of this Commission. It may not always be a pleasure at times but it certainly will be a privilege.

The first thing we need to do is approve the minutes of the December meeting.

MR. BERRY: So move.

MR. WILLE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved and seconded. We don't need any discussion on the approval of the minutes, do we? Any opposition?

(No response)

So ordered.

O. K., Mr. Harry Schafer.

MR. MAX SUMMERS: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, Harry couldn't be here



today and he asked that I discuss our two items of business.

We have a request from the Plaquemines Parish Oyster Association and Senator Samuel Nunez for consideration by the Commission to close the present oyster season on March 1. The present season would run to April 1 unless the Commission takes action ahead of time. We are in the process of examining this request and making some field surveys now, and we would recommend that the Commission empower the Secretary at his discretion to close the present season any time between now and the requested March 1 date.

MR. BERRY: You mean April 1, don't you?

MR. SUMMERS: Yes, April 1 is the framework of the law, but we would prefer to have a little more time to look this over and then make the information available to Mr. Angelle and authorize him then to take action in closing the season if the information warranted it.

MR. WILLE: What is the date on those letters of request? Did you just get them?

MR. SUMMERS: Just this January, yes, sir.



January 8 and January 12, respectively.

MR. BERRY: Mr. Chairman, I move that we follow the recommendation of the biologists in this case and give the Secretary the right to end the oyster season, close it, at such time as he deems necessary after studying the information that the biologists gather for him.

MR. LUTTRELL: Second.

MR. WILLE: Mr. Chairman, point of discussion. I think that at this time it should be brought up that we are going to go along with the biologists' recommendation, anyway, and I fully concur with the move and the second, but I think it should be brought up with the Commission with a decision from the biologists in the future if at all possible, that they should have a strong recommendation one way or the other. I realize that there is a time factor in here and that is the reason that we are doing this, but I think in the future that we should have a strong recommendation before we make a motion.

MR. BERRY: Call the question.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr.



Berry and seconded by Mr. Luttrell that we accept the recommendations of the biologists that they study and make a recommendation to the Secretary and that he in turn be empowered to close the oyster season before the April 1 date in the event there are sound biological reasons.

Any further discussion?

MR. BERRY: Call the question.

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

The motion is carried.

(The full text of the
resolution is here made
a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, Title 56, Section 432,
affords the oyster industry the opportunity for input for the early closure of the oyster season, and

WHEREAS, the Department has
received a letter from the Plaquemines
Oyster Association requesting a March 1,



1979 closure, and

WHEREAS, the Department has received correspondence from Senator Samuel B. Nunez, Jr., requesting a March 1, 1979 closure, and

WHEREAS, personnel of the Seafood Division discussed the March 1, 1979 closure with the President of the Louisiana Oyster Dealers and Growers Association with no objections, and

WHEREAS, the marine biologist will be making a survey to determine the feasibility for a March 1 closure,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission give the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries the authority to close the oyster season anytime after the biological study establishes the feasibility of the early closure.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's talk about the date for the setting of the meeting of the shrimp



industry representatives for the brown shrimp season.

MR. SUMMERS: We have recommended the date of April 30, which is a Monday, for the meeting at which we discuss the data and the information as we have it on the brown shrimp season and suggest the Commission then hold their formal meeting May 1 to set the season after the information has been discussed with the representatives of the shrimp industry.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have a tentative place set for the meeting?

MR. SUMMERS: A meeting room has been reserved at the Hilton, the Airport Hilton, as it was last year.

THE CHAIRMAN: We need a motion for the fixing of those two dates, gentlemen.

MR. RIGGS: I will so move.

MR. WILLE: I will second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Riggs, seconded by Mr. Wille. Is there any discussion? Any opposition?

(No response)



So ordered.

MR. WILLE: Give me the dates one more time, please.

THE CHAIRMAN: 30 April for the hearing and 1 May for the Commission meeting.

Thank you, gentlemen. Anything further?

MR. BERRY: I don't really think you need a vote or a motion, Marc. I think the Chairman has the authority to call the meeting. It is all right to have a motion but I don't think it is necessary.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Allan Ensminger.

MR. ALLEN ENSMINGER: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Commission, we have received a request from the St. Bernard Parish Police Jury to extend the 1978-79 trapping season for their parish. I have discussed this request with technicians of the fur section of our division and we do not feel that we have any need for an extension of the season in St. Bernard.

As you may be aware, we are having a very poor fur season in Louisiana this year. The



catch records indicate that we are down about 50 percent over last year's production. As you are aware, we have set extensions of seasons in years gone by but these have been based upon biological needs of a particular marsh area that had an overpopulation of muskrat. This is not occurring in St. Bernard and therefore we would recommend that the St. Bernard petition not be granted and that the trapping season end at the end of February, which would give them about another month and a few days of trapping, anyway.

MR. BERRY: If we protect the alligator about two more years, you won't have to worry about any trapping season. They will trap them all for you.

MR. ENSMINGER: I think you are probably right there, Mr. Berry.

MR. BERRY: I wonder what the environmentalists will think about that when we wind up with all the furbearing animals eaten by the alligators. I wonder how they are going to feel about the alligator then.

MR. ENSMINGER: Well, maybe they will



eventually make all the furbearers endangered species, then one of them can eat the other endangered species.

MR. BERRY: Isn't Anita Bryant against that?

(Laughter)

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Berry, we need to keep vulgarity out of this!

(Laughter)

MR. BERRY: I am sorry!

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, you have heard the recommendation of Mr. Ensminger with regard to the non-extension of the trapping season. Do we have a motion on this?

MR. WILLE: I move.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Wille. Is there a second?

MR. LUTTRELL: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Seconded by Mr. Luttrell. Any further discussion? Any opposition?

(No response)

So ordered. No extension.

Joe.



MR. JOE HERRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not an extension of the trapping season. It is kind of odd for me to come up here and ask for an extension on a wildlife management area, though, after Allan made his remarks and all those other remarks.

What it is, on our Russell Sage Wildlife Management Area it has been flooded during most of the trapping season, and to give the trappers an opportunity to get in there and do some trapping, the water is receding on there, so we would like to ask for a 14-day extension on Russell Sage.

Now the trapping season was set for January 1 through 31 of 1979, and this would run the trapping season for them through February 14 of 1979, or 14 days. Now on this area we do allow dog hunting for raccoons and usually try to work the days out comparable with the trappers on there, so at the same time I would ask for an extension or another season you might say for the dog hunters, which would be February 15 through 28. This would give both groups then an equal opportunity on the area to use it, and certainly we are in favor of



all the use we can get out of our wildlife management area.

Now this would not extend the trapping season past the dates set. It would only just extend on Russell Sage, it would not extend it past the regular trapping season dates as we have them in February there. Our recommendation would be to give these two groups an extension.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: You are affecting two groups here?

MR. HERRING: Right, right.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: You are changing two groups?

MR. HERRING: No, we are not changing them.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: How does it affect two groups?

MR. HERRING: We are just adding to it, Mr. Angelle. We are not changing. The trapping would normally end January 31. We are extending it on to February 14 so they would not have to pick up their traps for another season. Then starting the 15th then through the 28th would be



the dogs.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: O. K., but in between the dogs --

MR. HERRING: There would be nothing there.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: Between the 15th and --

MR. HERRING: No, it would be the 1st to 14th trapping.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: There would be no dogs allowed. I am trying to get it straight so our enforcement people will know what is going on.

MR. HERRING: O. K., no dogs would be allowed through February 14, and then the 15th through the 28th would be your dogs.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not a change, is it, Joe?

MR. HERRING: No, it is not a change.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: Dogs are not allowed now, under the present regulations.

MR. HERRING: No, right. They have had their season so it would just be an extension on it.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: No problem. I have no problem with it as long as we get it straight.



MR. GILBERT: Mr. Chairman, this is something that meets with the approval of both the trappers and the coon hunters, and we feel that it is something that is beneficial to both groups, and I move that we adopt what Mr. Herring suggested.

MR. BERRY: I will second that.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. Berry. Any discussion? Any opposition?

(No response)

So ordered.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, trappers in the Russell Sage Wildlife Management have requested an extension to the trapping season on this area, and

WHEREAS, due to most of Russell Sage being flooded during the regular trapping season January 1-31, 1979, and

WHEREAS, an extension of



14 days will be of benefit to the trappers and give more use to the Russell Sage Wildlife Management Area, and

WHEREAS, the raccoon dog hunters should also be given an equal extension,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the trapping season be extended to February 14, 1979 and that the dog season be permitted February 14-28, 1979.

THE CHAIRMAN: O. K., Joe, National Wildlife Week.

MR. HERRING: I might clarify what he was asking about. The dog hunters can use it October 28-November 2 and December 1-31, so this end of February would be just an addition. It would be something added.

O. K., the next item we have on the agenda, Mr. Chairman, is just a recognition of March 18 through 24, 1979, as National Wildlife Week, which is set aside each year, usually during



the first week of spring. The theme this year is "Conserve Our Wildlife" and this is one time that not only our personnel but usually the wildlife clubs throughout the state and many school groups and others do participate in this to make the public aware of some of our wildlife needs, some of the problems and some of the work that is being done. Many projects are sponsored by these groups each year and it is a pretty active week for these people, and so I would just like to recommend to the Commission that we do recognize these dates then this coming year, this year March 18-24, 1979 as National Wildlife Week.

We do have some kits over here available to anyone in the audience. We gave them out to the Commission yesterday, and to the press or anyone else who would like to have them, they are available over here after the meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Joe, what distribution do you make of kits among organizations such as Boy Scouts and 4-H Clubs and such?

MR. HERRING: We don't have any regular mailing list. We will have it in a news release



which is being prepared now, stating they can write to the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and a kit will be mailed to them. This is also in the schools. Now we have available right now probably about 3,000 kits, so in about two to three weeks they will be out and we will be out of them. This is how fast they go. They are lined up in our Baton Rouge office now, ready for mailing, and as soon as news releases come out and announce this, it has become very popular and the people have already started writing, even right now. They know it is an annual thing, so we are already receiving letters on it. The schools are normally mailed copies. Anyone we already have a mailing list on, we do furnish them to wildlife instructors in their program, deliver them to the schools and to organizations as they are doing in the educational section.

MR. LUTTRELL: They can pick them up in the district offices?

MR. HERRING: Oh, thank you for asking that. We do have a supply in each district office and the news release will state that, that they



can go by a district office -- Minden, Monroe, Alexandria, Ferriday, Opelousas, Lake Charles, Baton Rouge and New Orleans -- and pick up kits at all the district offices.

We try to make good distribution on it. Normally we get real good reception out of it.

THE CHAIRMAN: We need to involve all of our young people in addition to sportsmen and conservation organizations, so the more publicity you can give, the better.

MR. GILBERT: I move we adopt the resolution proclaiming March 18-24, 1979, as National Wildlife Week.

MR. LUTTRELL: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved and seconded. Any opposition?

(No response)

So ordered.

(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the 1979 theme for National Wildlife Week is "Conserve Our



Wildlife," and

WHEREAS, man holds physical dominion over Earth and all the creatures which inhabit it; and

WHEREAS, the activities of man often affect the welfare of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, we have seen all too much evidence of the harm man has done wildlife through such means as pollution of the environment and destruction of habitat; and

WHEREAS, man cannot afford the continuing loss of other species because of his own heedless conduct; and

WHEREAS, man has shown himself capable of wildlife management practices, legislative enactments and other measures that benefit wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the period of March 18-24, 1979, has been designated



as a special time for focusing attention on the need to help wildlife,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that I, J. Burton Angelle of Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, do hereby join the National Wildlife Federation in proclaiming March 18-24, 1979, as National Wildlife Week, urging all as they hear the slogan, "Conserve Our Wildlife," to resolve to do all they can in behalf of the wildlife cause.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right, under the items of Other Business, the Delcambre Shrimp Association I believe has a representative that would like to have a discussion. I think before that I would like to talk with Dr. St. Amant. Dr. St. Amant, would you like to make some comments with regard to the shrimp season first of all?

DR. LYLE ST. AMANT: I don't believe the gentleman is here that asked for that audience, on the agenda. He hasn't been around this morning. I assume he decided not to come or for some reason couldn't get here.



SECRETARY ANGELLE: Maybe he sent a representative.

DR. ST. AMANT: Are you representing Delcambre Shrimp Association?

FROM THE FLOOR: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any ladies or gentlemen in the audience who would like to make any comments with regard to that? The discussion of a three-day shrimp season in Vermilion Bay. Doctor, would you like to do so?

DR. ST. AMANT: I have the report on it if you would like to hear what happened in figures and then maybe if this discussion comes up somewhere else you will have some background information.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, please.

DR. ST. AMANT: By way of history, a number of years ago there used to be an early shrimp season in March and April for white shrimp. The shrimp industry itself, because of changes in shrimp patterns and fishing patterns, went to the legislature and closed these seasons in the spring and began to open in May only for the brown shrimp.



Now it became apparent after we began to do some work on the shrimp populations that there was a population of large brown shrimp that occurred in the spring, that moved back into the bay systems, and this is apparently of historical notice. The problem --

SECRETARY ANGELLE: Large brown or large white?

DR. ST. AMANT: Large white. Now we ran into this problem. Over half of these large white shrimp were intermingled with the upcoming brown crop, so it did not lend itself to harvest, but there was an area in Vermilion Bay only, in the open parts of the bay, where apparently the white population was predominant and there were practically no browns.

About four years we opened this thing on very short notice and we were criticized because the shrimp people did not have an opportunity to get geared up for it. We got action in the legislature to be able to set these seasons at odd times if the population was adequate. The following year there was not enough shrimp and we did not



open. Last year we had better information. It was our understanding that the shrimp people wanted this season and we opened it on April 28, which was a Friday, and we let it run for three days, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We made an effort to get a pretty good check on it and it was a rather interesting experiment.

Our indication is that there was 209,000-plus pounds of shrimp taken commercially and an additional 97,000 pounds taken by recreational people. The total value of this at that time was \$393,471 at the dockside, so we had over a quarter of a million dollars earned in three days by these fishermen.

The problem, of course, that developed is the one that I suspect the one the gentleman wanted to talk about. An aerial survey indicated we had 332 commercial boats and 970 recreational boats in this area and they were not scattered all over Vermilion Bay. They were up in one corner of the bay, so you can imagine they had quite a turnaround time in there. They were not too happy.

Nevertheless, I know of no other way in



a democratic system to open that thing just for certain people. If we are going to open, it will have to be open for everybody.

MR. BERRY: Doc, that is kind of like saying the state legislature sets the speed limits out here and builds the highways, but they don't try to control the traffic congestion and traffic jams.

DR. ST. AMANT: That's the point.

MR. BERRY: We aren't traffic cops.

DR. ST. AMANT: Now, even with this number of boats, of course, the catch per boat wasn't too high. The average catch, and of course I doubt if it came out just on there, but the average catch for the commercial boats was about 600 pounds, but that is pretty good at \$1.50 a pound for three days work, so they made about \$200 a day out there, and I suspect most people would go somewhere to pick up 200 bucks a day.

MR. BERRY: Doc, where did you get that \$1.50 a pound?

DR. ST. AMANT: I am looking at the prices that were paid to them, not what you had to pay,



Mr. Berry.

MR. BERRY: I don't believe they have sold it under \$3 a pound even to the processors in God knows when!

DR. ST. AMANT: Well, the price list we have is the prices that were paid at various places we checked. We checked two buyers in Delcambre and one in Cypremort Point, one in Cameron, one in Lake Arthur, one in Houma, and I think they averaged \$1.285 a pound.

Nevertheless, we think that this was probably what I would consider a successful operation. The shrimp were large. They were 26-30 count, and we had no evidence any brown shrimp were taken or that the crop was hurt.

I think this year we will just have to wait until we see what is out there. If there is any great number of shrimp and the shrimping industry is interested in taking them and there are no brown shrimp involved, our recommendation will probably be for you to consider a short season. If there are not too many white shrimp or if we have an intermingling of brown shrimp or there are



some other extenuating circumstances, we won't recommend the season, and it is simply that.

MR. LAPEYRE: It is not considered a management season as such. I mean we don't open it because we think it is necessary to thin the shrimp out or any such thing as that. It is essentially to give the people the opportunity to take advantage of a resource that they are going to otherwise lose.

DR. ST. AMANT: That's right, Mr. Lapeyre. All our indications and data indicate that the shrimp crop in Louisiana is an annual crop. There is no real relationship to the surviving population in the following production next year. If you have got good environmental conditions, you can get a high population, and if you get bad ones, you can get a low population, regardless of what your surviving population is.

Moreover, our tagging experiments show that these shrimp, once they leave Louisiana waters, tend to move rather rapidly well off shore and to the west, and there is considerable evidence that Louisiana is furnishing a good bit



of the shrimp that is caught off the east Texas area. So, if the Louisiana industry is to profit by its nursery grounds and its production, then it would seem to me that what we should do is try to arrange our seasons that will allow them at least as much advantage as we could without hurting the shrimp or hurting the industry.

MR. LAPEYRE: The reason it is limited to west of the Atchafalaya --

DR. ST. AMANT: You have got a lot of shrimp all over Terrebonne Parish, but you have got a whole crop of brown shrimp and I don't think you want to gamble 20 million pounds of brown shrimp for 200,000 pounds of white. I just don't think this is good management. Now, yes, if we fished all over the coast west of the Mississippi River, we might catch six million pounds of whites but we might ruin 15 million pounds of browns and I don't think we could recommend that.

MR. LAPEYRE: No, I agree. I am not disagreeing, but that was the point I remember you making a couple of years ago.

DR. ST. AMANT: Now I suppose if this



comes up this year we are going to have pros and cons. We have those that want it and those that don't.

THE CHAIRMAN: We still have plenty of time to decide that.

DR. ST. AMANT: Oh, yes. We don't have any evidence of what is out there now at all except our regular counts. We are not anywhere near ready to make any decisions.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Administrative Procedures Act doesn't require any advance information at this time, does it?

SECRETARY ANGELLE: The law requires about seven days notice.

DR. ST. AMANT: The law allows Mr. Angelle to set the season with appropriate notice and what we would do would be as soon as we began to develop the information, we would probably make it known publicly and have input from the shrimp industry as well as our people, and then we would make a recommendation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you thinking in terms of March and April maybe?



DR. ST. AMANT: This last year we opened on April 28. The opening date is entirely unpredictable until you begin to look at what is out there.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: When was opening day of the brown, spring brown season? May what?

DR. ST. AMANT: May 25.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: Ten days too early?

FROM THE FLOOR: Ten days too late!

DR. ST. AMANT: Let's don't get into that one this morning!

MR. LUTTRELL: We have the hearing on the opening date April 30.

DR. ST. AMANT: Mr. Luttrell, that has to do with the brown season. The white shrimp season is just a three-day short-time thing, which we would deal with sometime in March and early April directly with Mr. Angelle when we present him with the appropriate data. We would then go out in the press and make the notice, give them five or six or seven days, whatever is necessary, and then if we opened it, we would open it and we would close it the same way. There would be no



Commission action beyond the fact that you are being informed that we might do this.

MR. LUTTRELL: Doctor, I am sorry, I didn't know you were talking about white shrimp. But always, if there is a little bit of money out there to be picked up, let's have those people pick it up. You and I might get some of it after they get it in here.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your information, Doctor.

MR. LAPEYRE: I would just like to say because it is an effort on our part to make something available to people if they want it, I think we should try to devise some method of determining that the majority of the interested people actually want it. If the majority doesn't want it, I don't see any point in opening it, myself. So, between now and the time it comes to decide this question, I think we ought to have some way of determining whether most people who are involved, affected by it, want it or don't want it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Jean, do you think the industry would just voluntarily comment on that



without going through the rigamarole of another hearing?

MR. LAPEYRE: Well, we would have to have some means for them to do it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have any thoughts on that?

MR. LAPEYRE: No, not offhand, but I am just saying that I think we ought to think up some way in which we could determine what the sentiments of the industry are.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. St. Amant, do you feel that you have the pulse of the industry that expresses their feelings to you during your study period?

DR. ST. AMANT: There is no question they are going to express their feelings, but the question is I may not be able to determine just what portion of the industry they represent, and I don't know that anybody could.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: Your track record is pretty good, Doc.

DR. ST. AMANT: I think this, we will get input from the various shrimp associations,



including the Delcambre Association, which the gentleman is supposed to be here today, and while they certainly don't represent all the shrimpers, they do represent various segments, and we will get some input from private individuals and we will try to make our suggestions based on our best estimate of the what the industry feels like and what we know about the shrimp. Now that doesn't mean we can't make a mistake. We have made them before and I guess we will make them again, but this is generally the way to approach the thing.

MR. LAPEYRE: What would you think of just by means of a news release request written responses?

DR. ST. AMANT: We can try, but you know the problem with the shrimp is, Jean, it is just like this room. Everybody is sitting real quiet but if somebody would dump about a thousand silver dollars out there, you would see a pretty good scramble. There will be some head-knocking and bumping and shoving and this is what happens. These shrimp are worth a nickel apiece, sometimes ten cents apiece out there, and when you open that



season, the people don't always act like they do regularly.

THE CHAIRMAN: You mean we are likely to be accused of not having the greatest of wisdom, as we were accused before?

DR. ST. AMANT: The thing is we are dealing with a commodity that belongs to the public and it really doesn't belong to anybody, and it is a valuable commodity. It used to not be quite so valuable but now it is a lot of money and there will be a lot of pushing and shoving and talking because people want to jockey for position to get the best option, best advantage. I don't think we can control this. It is just human nature. The best thing we can do is to try it equitably and get them at the gate at the same time and let them go and hope they don't kill each other in the process. I think this is about what it amounts to.

THE CHAIRMAN: As long as the species is sufficient and it doesn't hurt the browns.

DR. ST. AMANT: We are not hurting the population, we are not hurting the shrimp.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to make a



comment from the audience?

MR. LEROY AUTHEMENT: I am Leroy Authement from Terrebonne Parish. Last Wednesday we had a meeting with the members from the Delcambre Fish Association and from what he told me, he left me under the impression that they were against it in Vermilion Parish for one reason, they had too many out-of-state boats in the area. It wasn't just the Louisiana boats. They had boats from Texas, some from Mississippi and Alabama in the area. Those double-riggers that pull one trawl, they have to put both booms down, and it is causing a hazard for turnaround. You have about 300 big double-rigger boats with both booms down and that can cause a hazard. You know, under those reasons there, that is the impression he left me with last Wednesday at our meeting in Grand Caillou with them.

MR. LAPEYRE: Leroy, didn't you elect a representative to speak for you in the legislature, the shrimpers?

MR. AUTHEMENT: The Louisiana Fishery Federation, we have a spokesman in the capital.



MR. LAPEYRE: Do you think that he could speak for the industry on this question of this four-day season?

MR. AUTHEMENT: Well, I think he could if he could be advised, but my advice to him would be to keep away from it, unless it would be opened all along the Louisiana coast. You take in Terrebonne Parish, we have Lake Pelto, we have Timbalier Bay. That's an area that you have a very large amount of white shrimp in early April. At the beginning of the May season, if it couldn't have been for the white shrimp that was still in when the season opened on the 25th, we would have had a real poor season, those that trawled just inshore. That's what we made our starting money with because on the 15th, the day that the season should have opened, I took a test and the shrimp was weighing 89 to the pound in Bayou Colyell where I got my stationary net, and on April 25 when it opened, the first I trawled, I hate to even mention the count, 132 to the pound, the brownies.

THE CHAIRMAN: It seems to me that there were a good many people who were asking for early



seasons, too.

MR. AUTHEMENT: Right, and the 15th would have been late last year. The crop was in but they moved out. Year before last it was the same thing.

MR. BERRY: When you say they moved out, they might have moved out of your area, but it don't mean they moved out of the whole Louisiana Gulf Coast.

MR. AUTHEMENT: No, not out of the Louisiana -- they moved out of the inland waters.

MR. BERRY: Maybe where you fished they moved out but not across the whole coast they didn't move out.

MR. AUTHEMENT: What I am referring to, Mr. Berry, is that they move out the inland waters along the coast where those big boats can get to them. Year before last, if you remember, I recommended the second strongly. You all stated the 16th. Well, the day of the 16th when the season opened inside, offshore along Grand Caillou, you know, between Grand Caillou to Colyell, and along the beach, the Last Islands, there was 2,500



barrels dockside to be worked that was in them big boats.

MR. BERRY: What you are telling me, though, is that you have some kind of super knowledge that the biologists don't have, that the other people don't have, that you are in a position to tell us what season we ought to have, than we are with all the input we get.

MR. AUTHEMENT: No, sir.

MR. BERRY: I wish I had this sixth sense you have got in my business world.

MR. AUTHEMENT: No, sir, not exactly, but the thing is, during the oyster season, I am out there very day. Year before last --

MR. BERRY: Where are you out there everyday?

MR. AUTHEMENT: In the estuaries.

MR. BERRY: You can take a jackass right in the middle of this room and build a four-sided enclosure all the way around him and put a knot-hole in each side, and you look at one end of that jackass and I look at the other, and they look at one side and they look at the other. What I am



saying is that you look through one knothole and you think you have seen that jackass but you haven't. This Commissions tries to look through all four knotholes and then we make a decision, and some years you look at one end of the jackass and other years you look at the other, but you don't get a chance to see the whole animal.

MR. AUTHEMENT: No, sir, but the thing is, in the estuary areas, if you are working in those areas, you see the crop that is there.

MR. BERRY: Again, the estuarine areas cover the whole Gulf Coast, across the Gulf Coast. You can have warm Gulf currents over in the Lake Charles area, in the Cameron area, and they can be cold over here, or vice versa. You are not dealing with the same thing just because down below Houma they are one thing and that doesn't mean the same conditions prevail over at Chandeleur Sound or the same conditions prevail over in the Galveston area, I will say.

MR. AUTHEMENT: True, but year in and year out, what is the biggest production estuary? In Terrebonne Parish, and that is the area I am in.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are not going to be setting the season today, so let's not continue this discussion. We thank you very much for your comments, Leroy.

MR. AUTHEMENT: We have got a lot of things against us and for us with the weather.

THE CHAIRMAN: We understand that. We will be hearing further from both you and Dr. St. Amant. Thank you.

Doc, would you want to give us a brief report for the benefit of the press of the landing of the shrimp, total take, last year?

DR. ST. AMANT: Well, in spite of the mistakes we make, and I am sure we make a lot of them, the production in 1978 was within 100,000 pounds of the production in 1977, and these are the two highest production years of record.

SECRETARY ANGELLE: The record starts when?

DR. ST. AMANT: Since about 1939. There was one year in the 1940s where they showed more production but we have pretty good evidence there was some switching of the poundage in there because



that is when they had price control and other type things going on, but other than that, we produced about 100 million pounds of shrimp head-on. Now even though the value of the crop this year was up about \$4 million, the dockside value in 1977 was \$104 million, I think, and last year it was about \$108-\$109 million to the fishermen.

This represents the best that we have seen in the 17-20 years we have been working specifically with shrimp. It is the best record we have in the last 30 years outside of this one better year in the 40s.

I don't know what we can do. We don't make these shrimp, we just count them and try to distribute them and divide them up and that is what is going on in this thing, and I don't think we have made too big a mistake.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Doc.

Ladies and gentlemen, the next item on the agenda is setting dates for the annual public hearings for input by the sportsmen's organizations and individuals and their recommendations for the seasons and bag limits. Each year we have those



hearings. We have been having them recently in the month of May. We have suggested the dates of Tuesday, May 22, in Bossier City at seven o'clock in the evening for the first hearing. We will do so in three portions of the state, north, central and south Louisiana. The second hearing would be on Wednesday, May 23, in Alexandria and the third hearing will be Thursday, May 24, in New Orleans, which will be at seven o'clock. Together with that same meeting in New Orleans, we will have our regular board meeting for the month of May at two o'clock here in New Orleans.

The places of each one of these hearings in Bossier City, Alexandria and New Orleans has not yet been determined but we will do that as soon as we can and there will be adequate publicity on that.

O. K., we need to set a date for our February meeting. I believe it was suggested that because of the conflict with Mardi Gras, which is on the 27th, Tuesday, we would set it up a week earlier, which will be then making our meeting on Monday, the 19th, and Tuesday, the 20th of



February.

MR. LUTTRELL: Mr. Chairman, I have one or two routine resolutions to ask the Commission to pass, if you don't mind, if I am in order at this time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir.

MR. LUTTRELL: This is routine but each year we do it. I move that all the board members that desire be permitted to attend the Enforcement Officers Convention February 10 and 11, I believe it is, in Lafayette; also that the board members be urged to attend the Louisiana Federation meeting in Lafayette. That is the first resolution, if I can have a second.

MR. RIGGS: I second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved and seconded that the members of the Commission be invited to attend the Enforcement Agents annual meeting in Lafayette -- do we need a motion for that? Is that for purposes of making it official?

MR. LUTTRELL: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. It has been moved and seconded. Any discussion on that,



gentlemen? Can we appoint you to represent us?

MR. LUTTRELL: Legally we can't attend those meetings without a resolution from the Commission. Now I know that a good many people on the Commission have done this but it is just routine, it makes it legal, in case someone should question us.

THE CHAIRMAN: In order for you to get your \$25 per diem, you want to be sure we have the resolution.

MR. LUTTRELL: No, that's not right at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, it is for expenses. I know, I am not talking about the per diem.

O. K., we have a motion and second. Any further discussion? Any opposition?

(No response)

So ordered. Thank you, Clay.

MR. LUTTRELL: The State has been asked to have an input into the steel shot-lead shot question. I would like to move that the Board instruct our Secretary to notify the Department of the Interior that Louisiana does not desire to join



in the steel shot program this year.

MR. WILLE: I will second.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does not desire to have the steel shot regulations apply to the State of Louisiana in the 1979-80 hunting season?

MR. LUTTRELL: Right.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dick, would you want to make some comments just a moment, please, with regard to the regulations that have been published so far? I understand we are in a comment period right now and we need to do something if we are going to do it.

MR. RICHARD YANCEY: The Fish & Wildlife Service has published the proposed steel shot hunting regulations for different states in the four flyways in the Federal Register and the comment period is open now and it will remain open until February 12, so anyone that has any views that they wish to express to them about what these regulations should or should not be, now would be the time to do that.

The proposed regulations are that we have



the same steel shot regulations in Louisiana that we would have had last year. That is, the steel shot zone in southwest Louisiana and the one up in central Louisiana, and the gauge exemptions would be the same as last year.

They are also publishing in the Register the fact that they propose to do away with the gauge exemptions on September 1, 1980. Those are the proposed regulations and the comment period is open now so anyone that wishes to can feel free to write to the Director of the Fish & Wildlife Service and express their sentiments on those regulations.

MR. LUTTRELL: Do you see anything wrong with the Commission as a body asking our Secretary to send our wishes up?

MR. YANCEY: Well, that is the purpose of the public comment period, to give everyone an opportunity to express their feelings on the matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: That's right. If I might be permitted an observation, we considered in our special meeting in October last year much public input, with a lot of soul-searching among the



members of the Commission, and we did what we felt was best and in the best interests of ducks and the duck hunters who support the duck resource, that no steel regulations should apply in Louisiana, and there has been essentially no change in the regulations from last year to this year. We still have the same discrimination in gauges, still the same ballistics, still the same crippling losses reasons and arguments, and I just think that there is no justification for any change of position and we should ask the Fish & Wildlife Service to leave Louisiana out or not have these regulations apply to Louisiana for this coming season and until such time as all gauges and perhaps all areas would be applicable, until the discrimination is over and the ballistics have improved.

I think this is essentially our position, isn't it?

We had a motion by Clay and seconded by Don. Any further discussion?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.



(The full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing the same steel shot hunting regulations for the 1979-80 waterfowl hunting season as those prescribed but rescinded for the 1978-79 season, and

WHEREAS, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is requesting comment and recommendations on its proposals for the 1979-80 season in the Federal Register as related to the required use of steel shot in certain zones in Louisiana, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does hereby go on record as instructing the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to write a letter to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife



Service which states that the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission opposes the requirement that steel shot be used anywhere in Louisiana during the 1979-80 waterfowl hunting season.

THE CHAIRMAN: Anything else we need to talk about?

MR. LUTTRELL: I would like to make a comment about that. I think this, should the Department of Interior believe and should it develop that lead shot are very detrimental to wildlife, to ducks, and they would require that all people, blanketed throughout the United States who shoot migratory game had to use steel shot, I could very easily support that and would do so, publicly, in newspapers, radio, what-not. But my greatest opposition is the fact that we do not know what a hot spot is. We don't know where they get this stuff. We don't know where they pick it up and you can't tell me they don't pick lead shot up in Illinois, as they come down along the Ohio River, the Mississippi River, the Red River, the Atchafalaya, and all places.



So, if it is really good, and I am not saying it isn't good, then let's apply it universally to everybody and to every gun and then you would get a tremendous amount of support for it. But to punish some few people because we say such-and-such a place is a hot spot is not too good and I believe, like Marc has said, there has been no change so we still shouldn't be required to go into it.

Thank you, Marc. That is all I have to say.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Our next meeting is 19 and 20 February and, gentlemen, in the event that we are short on an agenda, don't have much to discuss at that meeting, we can be in touch with Burt and perhaps we may end up in the event of that occurrence not meeting, but at any rate we will see what happens.

Does anyone in the audience want to make any comments or any observations, additions or subtractions?

(No response)

O. K., we are ready for a motion to



adjourn.

MR. WILLE: So move.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are adjourned. Thank
you.

(Whereupon, at 10:55 o'clock
a.m., Tuesday, January 23,
1979, the meeting was adjourned.)

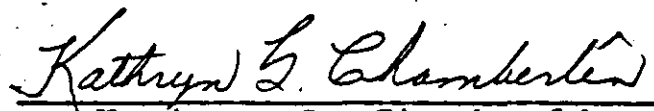
Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.



C E R T I F I C A T E

I, the undersigned reporter, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above and foregoing (52 pages of typewritten matter) is a true and correct transcription of the tape recording and of the stenographic notes of the proceedings herein, transcribed by me, at the time and place hereinbefore noted.

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 7th day of February, 19 79.


Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.